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The Burusho of Hunza

by E. O. Lorimer

THE small state of Hunza is the most northerly in British India. It consists for the most part of a close-packed mass of unscaled and unscalable mountain peaks over 20,000 feet, seamed by untrodden rivers of snow and ice; as might be anticipated, it is mainly uninhabited. Its frontiers march with Afghanistan on the northwest and with Chinese Turkestan on the north and northeast. But where the Hunza river has cut its way down from the Pamirs to join the Gilgit river and ultimately the Indus, there remain, clinging to the mountain sides, a few sloping, rocky terraces which, if water can be brought to them, can with diligence be rendered fit for human habitation. These oases of green amidst the barren desolation of rock and cliff and mountain peak are the habitat of a sturdy mountain people, the Burusho, speaking a difficult but extremely interesting language, of so great antiquity that no affinity between it and any other known form of human speech has yet been traced by the comparative philologist.

When D.L. was posted as Political Agent, Gilgit (1920–24) he made it one of his leisure tasks to collect material for a scientific study of Burushaski (the language of the Burusho) the result of which is a three-volume work*—grammar, texts and vocabulary—of which the last volume is just issuing from the press. In 1934—ten years after his retirement—we returned unofficially to Hunza, armed indeed with a considerable knowledge of the language but with no facility in speaking it, to live amongst the peasants and make such a study of their customs, agriculture, economics, etc., as amateur anthropologists might.

During our four years in Gilgit we had not failed to discover that the Hunzukuts (dwellers in Hunza) were the most attractive of all the likable mountain peoples of the Gilgit Agency, the most physically prepossessing, the most intelligent and the most trustworthy. All classes in Hunza gave us a warm welcome, from the Mir—who has

* *The Burushaski Language*, by Lt.-Col. D. L. R. Lorimer, Oslo, 1935 (England: Williams and Norgate) published by the Norwegian Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture.

2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

[pp 1-4 contain no textual material]

NOTE

121 This is not a serious book. Comparative philologists hoping for news of Burushaski, anthropologists interested in the highly civilized though materially primitive life of the Burusho of Hunza, ethnologists curious as to their origin, the scientifically-minded of every sort, are once for all referred to the published and to the yet unpublished books and articles of my husband, Lieutenant-Colonel D. L. R. Lorimer, late of the Indian Army and the Foreign and Political Department of the Government of India, hereinafter referred to as David or DL.

121 114 I have been concerned merely to set down our personal day-to-day experiences—they do not merit the name of adventures—and our first impressions of the delightful people who for fourteen months in 1934–35 were our neighbours and our friends.

The journey to and from Hunza and the semi-camp life there had at an earlier period been the commonplace, all-in-the-day's-work life of ourselves for four years (1920–24), as of a long series of other Political Agents and their wives both before and after us. The only thing that lent a spice of adventure to this last tour was our delightful freedom from all official responsibility, and our age. Changes of climate and altitude, shortages of food and sleep, fatigues of travel, at which one smiles at forty present a graver challenge to fifty-five.

120 The triumph of our elderly excursion lies not alone in the sheaves carried home by DL, but in the fact that we both came back more than a little battered, it must be confessed, but still smiling; and treasuring memories which are worth incomparably more than the price exacted.

121 My excuse for writing so superficial—perhaps worthless—a book at all must be that it has made me happy to recall this silver honeymoon spent in the Karakoram and to pay a tribute to our hospitable and beloved Hunzukuts as they were in 1935, as they must have been for uncounted generations in the past, as they may be for generations yet to come, if the poverty

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NOTE

/2/ and inaccessibility of their country happily keep them safely quarantined against "the sick fatigue, the languid doubt," the unrest and fear and hustle of our civilization.

For the map I am indebted to DL; the illustrations are my own.

E. O. LORIMER

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England I settled down first to translating the texts and working out the vocabulary, and then to an intensive comparative study of every word and every grammatical form occurring in my material. On this basis I then prepared and annotated the Texts and drew up the Grammar and Vocabulary as they now stand. This took in all four and a half years, from January 1926 to June 1930.

I have dwelt at some length on my methods of work, because without such knowledge it is impossible for the reader to form any just estimate of the degree of authority to which the book can lay claim. For the same reason I have made a free use of question marks in the Vocabulary and elsewhere to indicate points in regard to which my information is uncertain. I hope I have stated nothing as a fact except on reasonably adequate grounds.

The whole edifice stands essentially on the foundation of Jemadar Imam Yar Beg's Burushaski, a foundation the general reliability of which I think no one in Hunza would dream of questioning. But this statement requires serious qualification: it is IYB's Burushaski as affected by the mishearings and misunderstandings of the recorder. That there are such I have not the slightest doubt. I am only surprised that the substance of the Texts has worked out so homogeneous and, as I have now some ground for believing, so correct.

A special word of warning should be given in regard to the Phonetics. I am myself no phonetician and made no constant systematic attempt to distinguish by all means at my command between different sounds which sooner or later I knew to exist, but could not myself certainly distinguish. This applies specially to the two parallel series of cerebrals and non-cerebrals, aspirates and non-aspirates. Many cerebrals and aspirates may have escaped undetected; I can only say that where a sound is marked as cerebral or aspirate, it may safely be assumed to be such.

My general aim in the preparation of this work is now sufficiently evident; it is simply to give a perfectly objective view of what I was able to ascertain about the language. I have created a hypothesis

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only where it seemed necessary to attain brevity and clarity in the statement of facts. Such is my theory of the initial *ʿa- of many nouns and verbal bases, and the combination of it with the pronominal prefixes. Otherwise I have avoided speculation in realms outside my competence. I have raised no questions of the relationship between Burushaski and other languages and I have also intentionally omitted to point out many parallels in grammatical usage and idiom between Burushaski and the adjacent, though non-related, languages Shina and Khowar. In the Vocabulary on the other hand I have noted when the same word, or obviously a form of the same word, is in use in those languages. I have done this because I believe that many of these Shina and Khowar words have not before been recorded, and even when they have been, will not always be readily accessible to the reader.

As I have eschewed questions of relationship, so for still better reasons I have abstained from any attempt to propound linguistic theories of a more general nature. With less certain virtue I have also failed to supply any new grammatical terminology. Another terminology than that of my boyhood's reminiscences of Latin Grammar is certainly needed to describe the phenomena of Burushaski. I do not know that such exists, and I have thought it wise to leave this thorny matter to hardened experts and not to complicate the issues by amateur attempts which would only prove a stone of offence.

The principal work that remains to be done for Burushaski as I see it is:

1. To make a scientific determination of the phonetic system.
2. To clear up existing grammatical problems and to discover more.
3. To ascertain the relative frequency of various syntactical usages. Some which in my material occur rarely are probably in fact common enough.
4. To make a parallel study of Nagiri Burushaski and local variations in phonetics and vocabulary.

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PREFACE.

The following Vocabularies are based on the material collected in 1923—24, to which reference has been made in the Introduction, Volume I (pp. lvi. ff.), and were completed in 1930—31.

Thanks to assistance received from the Leverhulme Research Fund, I was able to revisit Gilgit and Hunza in 1934—35, and I then collected a considerable amount of new material.

Of this practically nothing has been incorporated in the present work. The additions, in the way both of new entries and of the elaboration of the existing entries, would have been considerable, and their preparation would have entailed great delay in publication. As matters stand I have not yet worked out the new material[1], and this has saved me from much temptation.

The revision of the *Burushaski—English Vocabulary* as it already existed, was, however, one of the many items of a too ambitious programme, which I did carry out, if only in a hasty and perfunctory way.

For this work I was fortunate in obtaining the assistance of Qudratullah Beg (QUB), son of Subadar Muhabbatullah Beg, a literate and extremely intelligent young man, with a remarkable feeling for language and the refinements of phonetics.

A thorough examination of the forms, meanings and uses of the words in even this very modest vocabulary would have been a major task requiring an almost infinite amount of time. I had therefore

[1] Attention may, however, be called to a note on certain features of Burushaski published in the BSOS Vol. VIII, 1936, pp. 627—636, which throws light on some grammatical and phonetic devices of the language.

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129 to restrict my aims to improving the phonetic representation of
121 the words, principally in regard to distinguishing cerebrals and non-cerebrals, aspirates and non-aspirates, and to clearing up doubts indicated by question marks in the original script, which chiefly related to noun-categories and to plural and pronominal-prefix forms, but also sometimes to meanings. Even these limited aims were not completedly realised; many forms and queries escaped notice or otherwise resisted determination.

129 One point resulting from this revision may be noted. The keyword as given in the Vocabulary, or the first form, where alternatives are offered, is the representation of the word, which from all information available I believe to be the correct one. Many words are misspelt, as regards cerebrals and aspirates, in the Grammar and Texts, which were in print before this revision was carried out. No attempt has been made to correct them in the quotations given in the Vocabulary. The reader is therefore asked to concentrate his mind on the keyword forms.

It will be observed that among the meanings given Arabic and Persian words frequently occur, to all which "H" (Hindustani) has been prefixed. This is for the sake of simplification and because explanations were usually given in Hindustani (or Urdu) in which these words are current.

Occasionally another Burushaski word is quoted under the description "Bu: Syn." (Burushaski Synonym). This is not to be taken as meaning that the one word exactly duplicates the other in meaning, but only that the second was used to explain the first.

This volume began to go to press while I was still in Hunza, and Professor Morgenstierne very generously undertook the unpleasant task of working my emendations into the earlier part of the script and revising the proofs of the first few sheets. This resulted in a very considerable saving of time.

I regret to have to append a lengthy list of corrections and additions. These are due in large part to the upsetting effect of growing knowledge and the alterations in the text which it entailed,

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For the rest I can only hope that they may be attributed to physical limitations rather than to economy of endeavour on my part. I have made a vast number of corrections in the proofs, but unfortunately this is a case where anything short of complete achievement acquires no merit. 128

I have made no effort to turn this into a comparative philological dictionary, a task beyond my competence, but I have aimed at indicating obvious loan-words, for the benefit of those who may approach Burushaski with a minimum knowledge of other oriental languages 121 192

The bulk of these loan-words will be found to be Arabic-Persian, i.e. Arabic words current in Persian, most of which have probably been acquired, more or less indirectly, from the latter language. 192

The original source of dissemination of Persian in all this part of the world has undoubtedly been the language of the Tajik population of the plains of what is now known as Tajikistan in USSR territory. This Tajik Persian is now beginning to receive attention (Cp. W. Lentz, "Pamir Dialekte, I" Göttingen, 1933, Introd. pp. 31 ff. and H. Sköld, "Materalien zu den iranischen Pamirsprachen", Lund 1936, Introd. pp. 8 ff.). Work has been done on it in recent years by Soviet scholars, but copies of their publications are not easy to obtain. [113]

What proportion of the Persian words recorded by me in Burushaski are familiar to all Burushaski speakers, I cannot definitely say. Illiterate and untravelled men and most of the women would not, I think use, or know, many Persian words for which there are adequate Burushaski equivalents. Against this, every child in Hunza seemed to know the word *tasvir* for "photograph". It was a very old man who, when he had lost or damaged his portrait, asked if he could have another copy of the *girmiśum*, the "script".

Other non-adjacent languages which have been laid under contribution are Hindustani and Punjabi.

With Tibetan I have no direct acquaintance but I have noted a few words in Burushaski which can be found in the standard Tibetan dictionaries.

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Preface

Apart from indicating undoubted loan-words, often to me of unknown origin, which are shared by Burushaski with one or more of the neighbouring languages, I have made no attempt to pronounce on the authenticity of those words which *prima facie* appear to be true Burushaski. Sanskrit cognates have been suggested for some of them by Professor Morgenstierne.

One important question remains to which I can give no precise or certain answer: What proportion do the Burushaski words in this Vocabulary bear to the total word-stock of the language? When I returned to Hunza in 1934 one of my hopes was to record sufficient new words to make my collection fairly complete as regards words in daily use and known to everyone. I was well aware that the still popular belief that peoples living in primitive conditions must possess simple languages and employ small vocabularies had been abundantly disproved by facts, but I had not realised what a lengthy business it is to collect and adequately record even a few hundred words after the first couple of thousand in constant daily use have been noted. How many new words I actually recorded I have no idea, but I am certain that they will go only a short way towards making the vocabulary complete. I could always easily get new words, the difficulty was to find time to have them elucidated and to write them down.

Burushaski possesses a large number of nouns of a technical nature relating to all the ordinary occupations of life, which, given time, can be ascertained by observation and enquiry, but it also appears to be very rich in verbs, and these are not so easily and quickly discovered by any direct method.

The *Werchikwar—English Vocabulary* remains much as it was when it was originally compiled. In 1934—35 I made several efforts to bring Werchikwar-speakers to Hunza to work with me there, but failed to secure competent men. The principal result was disappointment and wasted time. Eventually I paid a visit to Yasin and found an old acquaintance, with whom I worked there and whom I brought back to Hunza and kept with me for a few

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that the old palace is up at least another 500 or 600 feet. It was perched precariously on a huge outcropping of rock that jutted straight up into the air and the entire surface of the pinnacle was used for the building. There was no superfluous area surrounding it.

I had a long list of questions prepared and I knew even before I started that Sultan Ali could not give me all the answers because many of the questions were strictly horticultural—others dealt with dietary principles. I wanted to talk to farmers and individual people and housewives on both of these subjects.

I asked if he could arrange to take me to a group of farmers or even an individual farmer . . . that is, farmers who were capable and efficient—the better, the more intelligent and prosperous ones . . . so that I might delve into their ways and means of field husbandry.

He nodded, "This will be done. When would you like to talk to them?"

"Tomorrow morning, if it can be done," I replied.

"That's fine. I will arrange it!"

Wherever it was possible, I wanted to get my information direct from the people concerned. There is actually only one class of people in Hunza and one occupation, which is farming. I only know of one shop in the area and it sells mostly goods that have been brought in by the Chinese caravans that have passed through. I don't doubt also that there were some goods in this same shop that came into Hunza via Rawalpindi and Gilgit.

However, it was plain and clear that 900 of the citizens of Hunza out of 1000 made their living by means of farming. Therefore, as I had come to Hunza primarily to study the farming and horticultural methods of the people, the preparation of the foods they ate,

121 and of course the kinds and varieties of foods that were used, I attached great importance to this phase of my trip and I was definitely determined that, come what might, this information I would have thoroughly and in detail.

124 No doubt it would have been an advantage had I been able to speak either Urdu, or better still Burushaski, so that I could frame my questions as I saw fit and have answers that would be direct and would not require translation. However, that was not possible. Still, I had no reason to believe that my interpreter would not be a forthright individual who would give me the answers that were relayed to him clearly and to the point.

Mind you, I was seeking no miracle or world panacea. I wanted to find out the simple truth!

Further, I wanted to walk from farm to farm . . . that is, just selecting one at random here and there. I wanted to view the farmer's activities, study his soil and examine it, ask a few questions and thus, I could gather the information that I wanted and which was so vital to me.

344 644 The old palace proved to be in a good state of preservation. I wondered, because of its good condition, why someone didn't live there. Many of the rooms were still furnished. There were even rugs and tapestries placed and hung in their original positions.

[126] When we climbed to the top of the castle—that is, to the roof where I snapped many photos—it seemed mighty high and overlooked everything around us. But [133] in the distance were mountains that were well over 20,000 feet—and that is no exaggeration, but more likely an understatement.

There was a railing around this upper balcony and from this balcony you could walk into other chambers.

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made entirely of soft pliable leather, the lower part, including the soles, from yak hide and the upper part from cow or ibex hide.

I wanted to learn as much as possible about the good people of Hunza. Therefore I was interested in their crafts and craftsmanship.

All of the cloth used in making the garments the people wear and the special Hunzan hats are woven on looms that have been in use for hundreds of years. They weave 3 distinct types of material. It takes about 3 days to weave a length of approximately 15 yards of the best cloth, which is hardly sufficient to make a man's and a woman's "choga." The woman's requires 7 yards and the man's takes 9 yards. They trade commodities in exchange for the weaving. Then, during the winter, the men of the households cut and stitch the garments into durable, warm clothing.

The village blacksmith is also the music maker. Somehow, to me, that seems most appropriate for the clang of the hammer on the anvil rings a true music. These blacksmiths and musicians live in a section entirely of their own and they seem to keep mostly to themselves. It seems that all of the blacksmith-musicians of Hunza belong to a tribe known as the Bericho.

These people were sent to Hunza long, long ago by the Prince of Baltistan who was repaying a favor rendered him by the Mir of Hunza. These people have retained their independence and identity and do not generally take part in Hunzan activities. They even speak a language of their own known as Dumaki. This is also referred to as the speech of the Doma, or Bericho, of Hunza.

These people dwell in a quaint village or a community entirely of their own located just below Baltit. The history, the behavior and the manners and occupa-

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question, the error was cleared up. 128

Remember, I do not claim to be a Sherlock Holmes 124
or smart enough to detect by scent or otherwise an untruth or misunderstanding, so they may crop up in various places in the book.

Long before I left home I had prepared a set of queries. Among them were things for me to investigate —places, customs and chores for me to see and do. And from all this I was to make my own values and estimates as to the validity of the claims made about Hunza and its people. I tried to cover every aspect of importance and interest and I believe that, with very few exceptions, I faithfully accomplished my mission.

In preparation for the trip I read every book I could 122
find or locate that involved Hunza and in each case 114
the author had done a credible job, but most of them had failed miserably to give sufficient information—at least, for me—because 'twas information that I wanted. I wanted to know more about the agriculture of Hunza, about the health of the people, about their methods, their means and their way of life. None of the authors gave much of that vital data.

Right from the first moment that I made plans to go 121
to Hunza I decided that, if I wrote a book, it would 114
contain the most complete, the most detailed and the most thorough study of the people of Hunza yet accomplished by any writer. This determination came upon me from the frustrations I felt when I read the available books on Hunza and was left with a feeling that only the surface of the subject had been scratched.

In my endeavors to fulfill this undertaking, I have spared neither time, effort, risk nor expense. I certainly don't want my readers to be left with the feeling that all about Hunza has not been told. I definitely realize that no one in a short few weeks or even months could

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learn all there is to know about these most unusual people. At least I wanted to learn the answers to the many questions that come into the average individual's mind.

Therefore, it is my hope that I have not failed in these positive respects.

If my narrative is not everything that you hoped and expected, I sincerely trust that I will make up in the details and information of an authentic nature that I give to you concerning these remarkable people.

The facial features of the people of Hunza are most striking. They are invariably finer featured than the people of the West—more angular, more clearly outlined and defined, without being harsh or bold. Their facial characteristics can best be described by the phrase "finely, delicately chiseled physiognomy" . . . like the intricate creations of a gifted sculptor.

Whether because of the rugged outdoor life they lead or because of the tanning or curing process of their smoke-filled homes during the winter, the texture of their skin is quite unusual. I think I can describe it best if I say that their faces looked as though they were made out of smooth chamois.

I was struck by the similarity of the features of the people of Hunza. In the West, everybody you meet or know doesn't look like anyone else that you know. In fact, if you do happen to come across someone who has the likeness or features similar to those of someone else you know, you're immediately struck by that resemblance, which illustrates my point. In the Western world, there is a wide divergence of facial features and characteristics. In Hunza that does not hold true.

A little thought will establish the reason for this situation. Intermarriage during the centuries must have been the order of the day because of the confining nature of their homeland.

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nature of their homeland.

However, the Mir pointed out to me most clearly and emphatically that intermarriage among members of one tribe is absolutely forbidden. There are four tribes in the Baltit area and they can marry among these four tribes . . . Diramiting, Khorokoch, Borong, Barataling . . . but definitely not among their own tribe.

Lest this sounds like a difficult matter to hold in check, I want to explain that this is easier to control than may be imagined, for the simple reason that all marriages must be sanctioned and performed by the Mir. Therefore he positively knows who is marrying whom.

However, even if this has been the rule for many hundreds of years, the total population of Hunza, even today, stands at something less than 25,000 souls and Lord Curzon in his memoirs states that in 1894, the total population of Hunza was only 6,000. Therefore, among so small a population, it is almost impossible for them to marry very far beyond a family relationship. (In 1934 it was estimated that the population had risen to 15,000.)

Let's put it in another way. If the people of Hunza have remained more or less a pure people for nigh on 1,000 years and the population today is only 25,000, there must have been fairly close intermarriages. Perhaps that would, as I mentioned, account for the similarity of features.

I want to stress, at this point, that I came to Hunza primarily to learn and study (1) about their health and longevity and (2) about their means and methods of agriculture.

Let's examine or re-examine a few of the more pertinent details of their unusual country.

Hunza is a country that lies along the Hunza River

7:Tobe C,T-3 (1959)1960 AV7 Burusho AV7
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CHAPTER 56

2000 Years of Bread!

One of the Things that I did want to witness with my own eyes was the feeding and operation of a flour mill in Hunza. Apart from all of the other important and interesting data that I had hoped to gather while in this part of the world, the operation of the wheat mill was one that to me had great portent. I wanted to see the wheat actually going into the mill and coming out as flour.

Bread is said to be the staff of life. Well, whether it is or not remains a moot question. But to me at least, bread is important. I always have been a big bread eater.

Now it was only during the past few years that by reading and learning I found out how useless or even harmful the pleasant white loaf that we know in America is and can be. Having a fair idea about the health record as it exists in America and knowing the kind of

bread we eat, I was greatly interested when I heard about the people of Hunza and then found out that they eat only bread that is made from whole grain.

Then, when the same books or facts brought to light that the people of Hunza knew few of the world's ills, my interest was aroused to almost a fever pitch. I wondered if there was any connection between the kind of bread that we ate and our health and the kind of bread they ate in Hunza and their health.

From my own observations I also learned that wheat was the most important crop in Hunza, with the exception of apricots. I have also tried to establish which was the first domesticated grain in the annals of human history and I have not been able to establish clearly whether it was wheat or millet. But wheat is more adaptable to the temperate zones, whereas millet leans more to the warmer climes and it is clearly established that wheat is preferred by the white races.

I soon learned that there was a flour mill that functioned regularly, located on the route that we took from the palace at Baltit to the old palace or old fort. So on one of my walks I made it a point to investigate thoroughly the location, the workings and the construction of this old mill.

On my way up when we stopped at Chalt I saw one of these mills in operation, but I did not actually see the grain being made into flour.

For a man who has spent most of his life in the country and on a farm, I feel embarrassed to admit that I had never seen a flour mill in operation before.

During the past quarter of a century, or even a longer period, milling has, generally speaking, come into the hands of large corporations and that is why, I assume, I got it into my head that milling was a complicated big-time operation that required a great investment

7:Tobe C, T-3 (1959)1960 AV7 Burusho AV7
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CHAPTER 43

The Happy Hunzans

MY CHIEF OBJECTIVE in going to Hunza was to try, first, to find out if the people of Hunza were as healthy and as long lived as many writers and reports claim them to be. 121 164

Secondly, if they were the healthy specimens of mankind that the writers said, then I wanted to find out how this came about!

I don't claim to have any special perceptive powers, but the moment I arrived in Gilgit, I resolved that all of my faculties would be centered on observing the why's and wherefore's bearing on the health of these people.

I didn't have to be a very keen observer to realize quickly that in Gilgit the Hunzan aura of health did not hold. But remember, that was in Gilgit.

Gilgit reminded me very much of the typical frontier towns as we knew them in America, except Gilgit 361

361 [342] didn't just spring up overnight. By the appearance of the stone and mud houses, as well as all other features about the city, it was obvious that the city had been there for a long, long time.

Gilgit is indeed a strange city. It is one of these places that is right in the middle of nowhere, but to that mountain-harnessed area, Gilgit is a mighty important, strategic spot. Somehow I had the feeling that if there was a place called the "crossroads of the East" Gilgit had the sole right to the appellation, for through Gilgit would pass caravans from China, as well as travelers from Russia, Afghanistan, Persia, India, Pakistan and yes, undoubtedly from all other parts of the Eastern world.

000 While I did see quite a bit of the city and the surrounding country, I regret today that I didn't dig a little deeper and get about even more. I think Gilgit has many interesting stories to tell . . . how could it be otherwise? And if I ever go back (and I intend to) I would like to be the one who brings these tales to light!

• 121 [164] The Gilgitis, from a health standpoint or from appearance in general, did not impress me one bit. The people were somewhat similar to what you would find or expect in Pakistan or India. However, the moment I crossed the bridge over the Gilgit River and got into the hills, I resolved to concentrate, coldly and with deliberate calculation, on every individual we met. So many confusing and contradicting statements had been made about the people of Hunza, that I was firmly resolved that if study and scrutinization and observation would do the trick, then I would find out the truth.

124 Akbar was keeping pace with Cecil most of the time, while Sherin was with me, and I questioned him closely about every person that we happened to meet or pass. I had no trouble—none whatsoever—in spotting a Hun-

7:Tobe C,T-3 (1959)1960 AV7 Burusho AV7
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CHAPTER 71

Misconceptions

121 THIS CHAPTER I find the hardest of all the chapters in 114 the book to write.

So many gross errors or misrepresentations concerning Hunza have been given widespread publicity that I felt it was high time these errors were corrected.

120 It is established that a writer or a speaker who makes statements must stand behind the statements that he makes. That is all well and good in such instances and cases where the truth can be readily verified by means of encyclopedias, dictionaries or other reliable sources of information.

197 Inasmuch as Hunza is concerned, this definitely is not possible. To begin with, the language, Burushaski, is spoken only by the people in Hunza, Nagir and in a small area thereabouts. Dr. Berger in his intimate studies and broad travels has come upon only one other spot on the earth's surface where a similar tongue is

8:Clark N-5 (1948-1951) 1963
AV7 Burunbo AV7
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[P.39-C]

123 pull them out with my fingers. Bohar
164 gasped, then relaxed as the extraction permitted the abscesses at the roots to drain more freely."

101 This was in Hunza, the small, moun-
131 tainous, Central Asiatic kingdom
121 bordering on China, Kashmir, and Afghanistan, about which there has been recurring publicity, characterizing the land as a Shangri-La peopled by men and women of extraordinary
121 health and longevity. Since the beginning of man's role as a traveler, tales of far-off earthly paradises have been brought home to entertain the untraveled. No matter how many such El Dorados perish under examination, the next is inevitably welcomed into the lists with unblemished credulity.

[text continues on p. 40-B]

8:Clark N-5 (1948-1951) 1963
AV7 Burusho AV7
Hunza
[P 90-B]

121 In Hunza, say the romanticists, a race [379] of Moslems—descended, according to their traditions, from the lost legions of Alexander the Great—exist in a Himalayan paradise, thrive on simple foods, live a life free of the corruptions of Western civilization, and reach ages of 120 to 140, the men still fathering children when more than 90 years of age. After being exposed to the realities of Hunza life, one feels more than a sense of irony when he comes upon these representations of a way of life that is among the bitterest in Asia. The "Healthy Hunzas," the "Democratic Court," and the "Land Where There Are No Poor" — almost all of this is born of too-hurried observation by Western tourists.

648 206 Politically, Hunza is a protectorate of Pakistan, which controls its foreign